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[NO. 9.

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RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

EXTRACTS OF CORRESPONDENCE.

*From a minister in one of the Bahama Islands, New Providence,
January 10th, 1818.*

The books of which you advised me, arrived safe, and in excellent condition. They have proved a most acceptable supply. I am persuaded the attention of the committee of the British and Foreign Bible society could not have been directed to a part of his majesty's dominions which stood more in need of Bibles and Testaments than the Bahama islands. I am happy to say that numbers of families who had no Bible or Testament, (some indeed had a few leaves carefully preserved,) now possess the book they prize above every other, and rejoice in their possession. One poor woman told me she never read a chapter in the Testament in her life, till she read one in the Testament I let her father have, and that she never received such light as she did from reading it. The committee would be pleased to see the poor old widows reading their large Testaments; they consider themselves rich indeed, and they requested me to return their thanks to the committee for so great a gift; some of them would insist on giving the widow's mite, and some gave sixpence. I beg leave to offer my thanks, and those of the poor people, both whites and blacks, to the committee, for the Bibles and Testaments I have received from them, and pray that God may bless every member of the committee, here and hereafter.

I am happy to inform you, that all the Spanish Testaments are disposed of; forty-eight were sold in one day. My friend, Dr. Dumaresq, who took upon himself the disposal of the whole, having been acquainted with many of the Spaniards, told me, that as soon as they found it to be the New Testament, the avidity with which the books were purchased was beyond description. Dr. Dumaresq has received applications for upwards of a hundred Testaments.

From an officer in the royal artillery.

TOBAGO, May 18, 1818.

You will probably recollect my applying to your society for a supply of Bibles and Testaments, in the English, Spanish and

French languages, when in England; and now, in a far remote region of the earth, I am induced to address you on a similar subject. The books I brought from England with me, I have distributed from the north to the south of these Carribean Isles. In the distribution of the Bibles and Testaments, I have, from some individuals, exacted trifling sums, to insure a greater care of that sacred volume; but the word *exact* will not apply to all, as many have voluntarily paid the full amount of the books. At Barbadoes I had the pleasure of beholding the commencement of an Auxiliary Bible society, solely for the black and coloured people, patronized and supported by the Rev. Mr. Garnett, principal minister of the church in Bridgetown; they have drawn up their rules, and entered into liberal subscriptions. This Bible society had been at first connected with a school society, which consisted of no less than two hundred black and coloured children. At the time I was present there, I recommended their separating the two societies, which they have done, and promise themselves to forward to your society, very soon, a considerable part of their fruits produced since the commencement of their assembling. I supplied their school, gratis, with a few Bibles, and left a quantity for sale for the benefit of the society. I have likewise sent Bibles to the island of Dominico, under the care of a pious officer there, to distribute at his discretion; as also to Grenada, Trinidad, &c. and here. I am stationed myself for a time.

I have now to request a still larger grant of Bibles from your society. In the island of Trinidad, I find there are a number of Mahomedans, who are willing to read the scriptures; but, alas, neither are the Arabic nor even English Bibles to be bought for money.—Twelve Arabic Bibles, with about three dozen English, I think I could dispose of greatly to the advantage of your liberal society, and I humbly trust, to the glory of God.

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From a correspondent in Hanover.

MAY 25, 1818.

Last week a worthy clergyman brought me forty-five dollars, which he had collected. He told me that in his parish he had gone from house to house, for the purpose of inquiring into the want of Bibles, and to collect contributions. In this performance he had, to his great joy, found many who loved the word of God. He came to one poor cottage, inhabited, if I am not mistaken, by a day-labourer, who happened not to be at home; his wife said that her husband would gladly give something, for the Bible was their greatest comfort.

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From a Swiss clergyman travelling in Egypt, Alexandria.

MARCH 2, 1818.

I have sold here one hundred and eighty-one Bibles and Testaments, never at more, generally at less, than half of the cost price; half of these were Greek Testaments, and the other half comprehend twenty-four French Bibles. I wish I had more of the latter;

however, the Italian Bible, for which I have obtained fifty subscribers, is expected with great impatience. Upon the whole, I was rather surprised to find, notwithstanding the prevailing prejudices against the Bible, which I was daily obliged to witness, that it was eagerly sought after by many from whom I never expected such an inquiry.

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From the Rev. Robert Pinkerton.

PLESKOFF, May 30. 1818.

On the 25th instant I left St. Petersburg, and commenced my journey into White Russia, by directing my course towards Gatschina, the beautiful summer residence of the late emperor. Before separating from my dear family and friends, I had the satisfaction of seeing our beloved President, just returned from Moscow, who gave us the most favourable account of the proceedings of the society in that city. The prince has also, as on former occasions, furnished me with a number of letters of recommendation, in the name of the committee, which I hope will powerfully tend to promote the benevolent work in which I am engaged, particularly in those parts of White Russia, and Lithuania, which I have never visited before. Continuing my course from Gatschina, through Luga and Borovitch, I found myself early in the morning of the 27th, approaching the once strong and massive but now fast mouldering walls and towers of the ancient capital of the principality of Plescovia. This city, like her sister Novogorod, though still retaining numerous monuments of former greatness and opulence, is, in general, in a ruined state. The number of its inhabitants is still reckoned about ten thousand.

I met with a very kind reception from the archbishop, (residing in a monastery about five versts out of town, beautifully situated on the banks of the Velikia,) who, in union with his excellency the governor, since my last visit to this place in 1816, has succeeded in forming a Bible society for this province, which contains a population of upwards of 650,000 souls. This took place on the 12th of March, 1817, and the progress of the institution, during the first year of its existence, has far surpassed their fondest expectations. The number of annual subscribers is two hundred and eleven, and of benefactors eleven hundred and seventeen, among whom there are many of the poorest of the peasantry, who, on being made acquainted with the simple and sacred object of this society, willingly came forward with their kopeks to aid its funds. The subscriptions, and kopek collections made among the peasantry, during the first year, amount to near 18,000 rubles. The demand for the holy scriptures has been great.

The archbishop informed me that in his diocese, which consists of 450 churches, the greater part of the clergy are still without Bibles! Through the continued exertions of the society, however, with this learned and venerable prelate at its head, there is good reason to hope, that this lamentable scarcity of God's word, not only among the clergy, but also among numbers of the laity, who are able to read it, will be removed.

From the same.

WITEPSK, June 5, 1818.

On my arrival in Potolsk, I met with a very kind reception from his royal highness the duke, who inquired particularly respecting the prosperity of the Bible society in different quarters of the world, and expressed his great satisfaction at its continued success in every province of the Russian empire. On the 4th instant we had a full meeting of the members of committee, in which several new arrangements respecting the distribution of the sacred writings were proposed and adopted, which, it is hoped, will produce good effects.

The income of the society during the first year, is four thousand five hundred and thirty-eight rubles. Since receiving the Bibles and Testaments from St. Petersburg, upwards of three hundred copies have been sold and circulated. They have opened a sale for the holy scriptures in the chief market place, and have sent numbers of copies into the district towns of the province for sale and distribution.

This society has two associations, one in Velege and the other in Polotsk. Both in Pleskoff and in this city, I have visited the prisons and hospitals, and distributed the sacred volume among the afflicted and unfortunate. The number of the Jews in this city is great; they compose upwards of one half of the inhabitants, who are reckoned at twelve thousand. One of the directors of the committee, general Tshorba, is very zealous in circulating the Hebrew Testament among them.

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From the same.

MOGILEFF, June 10, 1818.

It affords me great satisfaction to be enabled again to address you from the seat of the White Russian Bible society, and to inform you of its prosperity. I now write to you from the residence of the venerable archbishop Daniel, who most kindly invited me to lodge with him during my stay, and who is unwearied in his exertions to further the Bible cause in his extensive eparchy. At a very respectable meeting of the committee, at which the archbishop, the catholick bishop, and count Tolstoy attended, I learned the particulars of their transactions since the formation of the institution of November 1816, and was happy to see several propositions agreed to, which promise to accelerate their benevolent labours in time to come. They have already succeeded in bringing into circulation upwards of three thousand two hundred Bibles and Testaments in different languages, of which number eighteen hundred copies have been distributed in the army. According to the regulations of the late much lamented field-marshal prince Barclay de Tolly, each regiment was at first furnished with one Bible and twelve Testaments. The Bible was given to the chaplain of the regiment, and each of the twelve companies, of which it is composed, received a Testament; and the chief priest of the army informs me, that, at stated times, each company is assembled to hear the Testament

read. Those also among the soldiers who are capable of reading, have opportunities of obtaining copies for themselves; but, as the number of these is but small, the above regulations were thought to be the most proper in the first instance, for making the soldiers acquainted with the saving truths of the gospel. Many of the officers have purchased Bibles for themselves, particularly in the French, German, and Slavonian languages. The amount of subscriptions and donations already received from different regiments, is about ten thousand rubles.

In the town of Skloff, which is mostly inhabited by Jews, I found them exceedingly desirous of obtaining Testaments. They told me that they had seen one in the possession of a young man belonging to another village, but that he would not consent to let them have it. This roused their desire to obtain copies for themselves. I distributed ten Testaments among such of them as I found capable of understanding them, and was sorry that I had no more with me, as many came afterwards, earnestly begging for them. The number among the Jews in this country, who understand the Hebrew, is much greater than I formerly supposed.

DOMESTICK.

SYNOD OF NEW-YORK AND NEW-JERSEY.

The Synod of New-York and New-Jersey met in the City of New-York on the 20th Oct. 1818. A general and very respectable delegation of ministers and elders attended from the Presbyters of Long-Island, Hudson, New-York, New-Jersey, New-Brunswick and New-Town.

The Rev. Dr. ASHBEL GREEN was chosen moderator; and the Rev. WILLIAM A. M-DOWELL, and the Rev. PHILIP M. WHELPLEY, were chosen clerks.

Resolved, That the synod will spend Thursday evening in special prayer; and that Dr. ROMEYN, Dr. PERINE, and Mr. SPRING, be a committee to make arrangements for the observance of said evening.

The Directors of the African school made their report, which, being read, was accepted, and from which we make some extracts, as well as from the minutes of the meeting.

The Directors of the African school, in laying before Synod a report of their proceedings for the past year, have no account to give of splendid successes. Africa still lies in ruins; and the cries of distressed millions remain unsilenced. They see, however, no cause for discouragement; but every reason to bless God for his smiles on the infant institution, and to go forward with renewed zeal in his strength.

The board employed one of their members the last autumn to visit several towns in the northern part of this state, and in New-Jersey, to solicit contributions for the school, and have appointed several agents to perform the same service in particular districts; but have

not thought it proper, in the infancy of the establishment, to make any extensive application to the publick charity. From the success, however, which has hitherto attended their applications, they see no cause to doubt that the providence of God, and the liberality of the churches, will furnish funds commensurate to the wants of the school. The chief difficulty in the present state of our colored population, is to find a sufficient number of suitable young men; and they permit themselves to hope, that the members of the Synod will interest themselves in looking out for proper characters in the different parts of the country where they dwell.

In the course of the year the board have taken one more young man under their care, by the name of John Jackson; and have now three in the school, whose deportment and progress have been such as to give entire satisfaction. In the publick examination, which was held in July last, the proficiency which Pennington and Gloucester, exhibited in reading, writing, English grammar, arithmetick, geography, composition, and speaking, was highly gratifying, and exceeded all expectation.

The board have expended the past year, in printing, and on the school, the sum of \$477 66; and have now in the treasury \$1040, 72.

There is a prospect that several more will be added to the school in a short time. Among these it may be proper to mention the case of a man in Charleston, (South Carolina,) who has been introduced to the board by the Rev. Dr. Palmer, of that place. This man whose name is *Adam*, was, a few years ago, with his wife and her sister transported from the Gold Coast, in Africa. These three persons, now free and pious, and retaining a perfect knowledge of their native tongue, are earnestly desirous to return to their kindred, to declare to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. These, with a son of the sister, a boy twelve or fourteen years of age, the board have given orders to have sent on as soon as *Adam* shall have acquired sufficiently the first rudiments of education.

The board are happy to find that the attention of the publick is increasingly turned to this long neglected people; and hope that the time is not far distant when a large portion of the American church will be united in one great effort to rescue from destruction fifteen hundred thousand souls perishing in the midst of us, and to make them the instruments of salvation to fifty millions wandering from God in the wilds of Africa. Several societies among charitable females, and even among people of colour, have already been formed in different parts of the country to aid the operations of the Synod.

But, while they refer to these encouraging events, they cannot pass over one which has filled them, and many of the friends of Zion with sorrow. They allude to the death of him to whom, though his modest retiring nature concealed his agency from the world, the praise really belongs of originating the African school, as well as several other institutions which rank among the most important and beneficent in our country, and who died in the service of Africa. The name of Samuel John Mills, ought to be known to the churches,

and to be had in grateful remembrance, while worth is honoured, and humble, disinterested, and laborious piety is beloved. For a mind teeming with plans to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, wholly devoted to that single object, and struggling incessantly to rouse others to the same spirit, they fear they shall not soon see his like again. When Africa has lost such a friend, her helpless and wretched state is more than ever to be pitied. Who will catch his falling mantle, and rise up to plead the cause of a poor outcast race?

NARRATIVE OF THE STATE OF RELIGION

WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF THE SYNOD OF OHIO.

The kingdom of Jesus Christ is not of the world; yet it is in the world, and often subject to distressing reverses, and often rejoices in pleasing prospects, as well as present triumphs. To the spiritual Zion the light of the Sun of righteousness is necessary: when he shines, there is joy in her habitations; when he is withdrawn or beclouded, there are sadness and mourning. It is interesting to view God's dispensations to his church in past time, to catch her aspect under the dealings of his power and mercy, and to anticipate her future prosperity and glory. However, to see distinctly, and to judge correctly, is often difficult, if not impracticable, on the account of the mixture of good and evil, of the pleasing and the painful, which strikes the mind even at the first view.

The Synod of Ohio, having heard the accounts of the churches under their care, find that no very material changes have happened during the last year.

In many parts of our bounds religion has gained ground; yet its progress has been very gradual. In some places it has advanced more rapidly, and occupies a more commanding attitude, and in many congregations it has been stationary, if indeed religion can be supposed to be stationary. Several congregations in the presbytery of Richland have received a considerable accession to the number of their members, and appear to have enjoyed encouraging tokens of the divine presence, although nothing very remarkable has been observed. A large proportion of the country over which the presbytery extends is destitute of the stated means of grace, and the remainder is but partially supplied. Too much indifference with respect to religious instruction undoubtedly prevails: yet it is encouraging to hear of increased attention to gospel institutions, and growing demand for the word of life.

In Lancaster presbytery, also, the attentions and earnestness of the people seem to increase. Several congregations and neighbourhoods have been favoured more highly with divine influences, reviving to churches and awakening to sinners—Granville and Athens may be mentioned here, in both which there have been considerable additions to the church; and also Greencastle and Centreville, two small vacancies, towns in Fairfield county, where a promising church has been formed, to which near forty persons, who profess to have obtained the hope of life within the last year, have joined themselves.

Throughout the greater part of this extensive presbytery, however, there is much reason, we fear, for the complaint of deadness. Too many real christians may be slumbering and sleeping with the hypocrite. Too many churches may not consider, as they ought, the importance of the blessings which they enjoy, the necessity of faithfulness, and the danger of desertion.

The presbyteries of Washington and Miami have experienced but little change for some time past. Most congregations under their care have gradually, and some have rapidly increased in the number of church members. No remarkable effusion of the grace of the Holy Spirit have been noticed, nor have any remarkable declensions occurred. It cannot be observed without pain, however, that the region which includes the northern part of these presbyteries, the greater number of the labourers in the vineyard have been removed by death or otherwise; yet we trust that others will be found to fill their room.

While then we lament that, in a painful degree, iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold, we have much reason for rejoicing thankfulness, and hope.

Some, perhaps much good has been done, and our prospects may be considered as brightening. We will not despise the day of small things. Let us pray that God would grant us times of refreshing, that christians may be comforted and edified, and that many sinners may be converted.

May we and all christian ministers, and all christian churches, perform our duties with fidelity and success, and receive an everlasting crown from our Judge, who is our Saviour. Amen.

MISCELLANEOUS.

FEMALE SABBATH SCHOOL OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH, BALTIMORE.

On Monday last the second annual meeting of the members of this institution, was held in the lecture room attached to St. Peter's church, at which the scholars and many of their parents were present: and a number of ladies and gentlemen not members, being permitted to attend, were favoured with an opportunity of beholding one of the most interesting, impressive and delightful spectacles that ever was presented to the eye of philanthropy.

Upwards of one hundred children, all comfortably clad, and evidencing by their demeanor that their manners as well as their morals had been cultivated by their persevering and indefatigable teachers—and an adult class of between twenty and thirty matrons, who became as little children to be enabled to read for themselves that precious word of truth which had long since had its spiritual operation on their hearts—these all uniting with their teachers in an anthem of praise, sung alternately to the Great Author of every good and perfect gift—and a peculiarly eloquent and appropriate

address delivered by the estimable pastor of that church, the Rev. J. N. K. Henshaw, with an exhortation from the Rev. Mr. Wydown, were circumstances that the eye and ear dwelt on with holy joy, and that the Angels in Heaven might contemplate with delight.

After an introductory prayer by Mr. Henshaw, the following report was read, to wit.

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

Of the board of managers of the Female Sabbath school of St. Peter's church.

At this period of another revolving year, when your managers are called on to make an annual report to the society, it is with peculiar pleasure and heartfelt gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that in fulfilling this duty they have an opportunity of detailing the present prosperous and flourishing state of the school, which, at our last annual meeting, consisted of a superintendant, seven teachers and eighty-five scholars. Since when there has been admitted one hundred and fifty-five children, making in the whole two hundred and forty scholars; of whom one hundred and seven may be called regular attendants. From the great increase in the number of children, it has been found necessary to have a second division of the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th classes, and to procure five additional teachers, which makes the school at present to consist of a superintendant, twelve teachers and one hundred and seven scholars. The board would notice here with sentiments of regret and sympathy, that owing to the indisposition of her mother, and other afflictive circumstances, our superintendant was prevented attending the school for some time; that the teachers officiated in her place until the first of May, when a special meeting of the managers being called, another superintendant was appointed in her place—to whom, and the teachers generally, the board takes this opportunity of tendering their warmest acknowledgements for the unremitting zeal, diligence, and fidelity with which they have persevered in their labour of love; and we confidently hope the day is not far distant when the good seed they have sown will bring forth abundantly, in some three, in some sixty, and in some an hundred fold, to the glory of His great name who has graciously implanted in their hearts, a desire to be useful in their day and generation: and we are strengthened in this hope, when we reflect on the great manifestation of his grace to our teachers, six of whom since our last report, have been brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, have made a publick profession of their faith, and been received in communion with the church. We would likewise mention with great satisfaction, that the superintendant and teachers have set apart one afternoon in every week, when they meet together for the purpose of invoking a blessing on their pious endeavours to impart instruction to the ignorant poor. To these meetings they have invited such of the children as they thought most likely to be benefitted by the exercises, and we fervently pray that He who hath blessed this means of grace to the teachers, will not withhold the

teachings of his spirit from those dear children. With pleasure we would mention that three of our managers, the superintendant and two of our teachers, in conjunction with some ladies from three of the other churches, have opened a school for the instruction of adults: they teach two nights in each week, and have abundant cause of thankfulness in the success of their undertaking; they have already admitted forty-seven scholars, twenty-two of whom attend regularly at the Sabbath school, forming an adult class—a none of whom are many mothers in Christ, who are only enabled by the use of spectacles to discern the characters which fill that sacred volume they are so anxious to be able to read, and which contains those blessed promises on which they have built their hopes of Heaven. The example of attention to the religious exercises of the school, which they set the younger members, together with the prayers which from time to time they offer up for us all, in opening and closing the school, inspire a hope, that while our institution is the means of conveying instruction to their minds, their admittance will prove a blessing to many souls. We have already had the satisfaction of seeing seven of this interesting class exchange their primers for Bibles, in which they are enabled to read with less than three months instruction; another of them, who when admitted the last of June did not know the alphabet, on 16th August could read in easy sentences and spell in two syllables without the book.

It would swell the report to too great a length, were we to enumerate the different instances of rapid improvement in the children; but we cannot forbear mentioning Mary Booker, a child ten years old, who, in one week committed to memory seventy-six verses of scripture, and has since, in ten Sabbaths, committed three hundred and ninety-eight verses. Jane Booker has in the same time committed two hundred and eleven verses, and Charlotte Buckmiller one hundred and six verses, besides the whole of the Evangelical catechism, the church catechism, and a great number of hymns. Eliza Dillon committed to memory in one week, 15 hymns; Ann Dillon 9; and Amelia Dillon 6; besides their customary lessons for the week.

All the children in the school, many of whom do not yet read, are learning the Evangelical catechism, have been taught the Lord's prayer and the creed; and the board feel very grateful for the general improvement in the children's reading and spelling, and observe with pleasure, the neatness of their appearance and their orderly behaviour in the house of God; and we would congratulate the benevolent contributors to this institution, on the gratification they must experience every Sabbath, on hearing near one hundred infant voices joining with the great congregation in giving praises to our common Father. It appears from the report of our treasurer, that there remains in her hands, at present \$123,86—to which is to be added our annual subscription, just become due. The managers take this opportunity of acknowledging with gratitude, the liberality of the patrons of this institution, which has enabled them not only to discharge the incidental expenses of the school, but to distribute, during the inclemency of last winter, seventy frocks, seventy-five

shawls, twenty-five bonnets, and upwards of one hundred pairs of shoes, besides other articles of necessary cloathing, which the dear children were suffering for. From this brief exhibit, the society have great cause of thankfulness, for the benevolent disposition of the members, and for the assistance they have received in promoting the great object of the institution. Under the firm conviction of the justness of this statement, we are encouraged to persevere in the undertaking, grateful that we are permitted so high a privilege. To Him alone, to whom must be attributed the first excitement of the spirit in us to make the attempt, be all the glory.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

(Concluded from page 122, vol. 4.)

We cannot enumerate all the particular cases which fall under the cognizance of a christian church, but shall mention a few which are recorded in the Scriptures for our imitation.

A departure from the faith of the gospel, of any of its leading doctrines, is an object of christian discipline. "I would they were even cut off that trouble you—I have a few things against thee, because thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam—so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Gal. v. 12. Rev. ii. 14, 15, Tit. iii. 10.

It is worthy of notice, that the only passage in the New Testament wherein heresy is introduced as an object of discipline, makes no mention of any thing as composing it but what relates to the principles of the party. It may be supposed, that those who were accounted hereticks, by the apostles were as impure in their lives as they were antichristian in their doctrine, and that they were commonly disturbers of the peace and unity of the churches: but however this might be, neither of these evils are alledged as the reason for which the heretick was to be rejected. All that is mentioned is this: "He is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

He is "subverted;" that is, his professed faith in the gospel is in effect overturned, or rendered void; consequently he requires to be treated as an unbeliever. He is "condemned of himself;" that is, the gospel being a consistent whole, he who rejects some of its leading principles, while he professes to retain others, is certain to fall into self-contradiction; which if clearly pointed out in a "first and second admonition," and he still persist, he will be compelled obstinately to shut his eyes against the light, and thus "sin" against the dictates of his own conscience.

It has been asked by persons who disapprove of all church proceedings on account of difference in religious principles, who is to judge what is heresy? We answer, those who are to judge what is immorality in dealing with loose characters. To suppose it impossible to judge what heresy is, or to deny that the power of so deciding rests in a christian church, is to charge the apostolick precept

with impertinence. It is true, the judgment of a church may be erroneous, as well as that of an individual; and it becomes them in their decisions to consider that they will all be revised at the great day; but the same may be said of all human judgment, civil or judicial, to which no one is so void of reason as on this account to object.

It has been farther objected, that censuring a person on account of his religious sentiments invades the right of private judgment, is inconsistent with the liberty of the gospel, and contrary to the leading principles on which Protestants have separated from the church of Rome, and Protestant dissenters from the church of England. The right of private judgment, while we claim no connexion with others, is an undoubted right. We may be christians, infidels, or atheists, and none but God has any controul over us: but if we desire the friendship and esteem of good men notwithstanding, or claim admission to a christian church: or should we be in it already, and claim a right to continue our situation, surely they would not be obliged to comply. If so, our right of private judgment must interfere with that of others, whose judgment tells them that there can be no fellowship between light and darkness, or communion between him that believeth and an infidel. If the liberty of the gospel consists in a right of fellowship with christian churches; whatever be our principles, it will follow not only that unbelievers may claim visible communion with believers: but that no exclusions for immorality can be justified, provided the party insists that his sentiments are in harmony with his practice. There is a great variety of opinion as to what is morality, as well as to what is truth. One loose character believes in polygamy, another in concubinage, and a third can see no harm in fornication, nor even in adultery, provided it be undiscovered.*

If the churches of Rome and England had done nothing more than exclude from their society those characters whom they considered as deviating from the first principles of the gospel, without subjecting them to civil penalties or disabilities, however we might have disputed the truth of their doctrine, we could not justly have objected to their discipline. We should suppose, that the separation of Protestants from the one, and of Protestant dissenters from the other, was for the sake of enjoying a purer church state, wherein they might act up to the laws of Zion's King; and not that they might live as though there were no king in Israel, which is the case where every man does that which is right in his own eyes.

In cases of notorious and complicated wickedness it appears, that in the primitive churches immediate exclusion was the consequence. In the case of the incestuous Corinthian, there are no directions given for his being admonished, and excluded only in case of his being incorrigibly impenitent. The apostle determined what should be done—"In the name of the Lord Jesus when ye are gathered together to deliver such a one unto Satan." We cannot but consider it as an error in the discipline of some churches, where persons have been detected of gross and aggravated wickedness, that their exclusion has been suspended, and in many cases omitted, on the ground of their

* Such was the morality taught by Mr. Hume.

professed repentance. While the evil was a secret, it was persisted in; but when exposed by a publick detection, then repentance is brought forward, as it were in arrest of judgment. But can that repentance be genuine which is pleaded for the purpose of warding off the censures of a christian church? We are persuaded it cannot. The eye of a true penitent will be fixed on the greatness of his sin, and he will be the last to discern, or talk of his repentance for it. So far from pleading it in order to evade censure, he will censure himself, and desire nothing more than that testimony may be borne against his conduct for the honour of Christ.

But allowing that repentance in such cases is sincere, still it is not of such account as to set aside the necessity of exclusion. The end to be answered by this measure is not merely the good of the party, but "clearing of a christian church from the very appearance of conniving at immorality; and which cannot be accomplished by repentance only. Though Miriam might be truly sorry for her sin in having spoken against Moses, and though she might be healed of her leprosy, yet "the Lord said unto Moses, if her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days; and after that let her be received in again." Num. xii. 14.

We do not suppose, however, that every notorious fault requires immediate exclusion. The general rule given is—that notorious evils should meet with a publick rebuke. "Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear." 1 Tim. v. 20. But this proceeding does not appear to amount to exclusion; it is rather of the nature of a censure or reprimand, accompanying an admonition. To us it appears, that the circumstances attending a sin ought to determine whether it require immediate exclusion, or not. If these be highly aggravating; if there appear to have been premeditation, intention, and perseverance in the crime, put away from amongst yourselves that wicked person; but if circumstances extenuate, rather than heighten the evil, solemn admonition, accompanied with rebuke, ought to suffice, and no exclusion to follow but in case of incorrigible impenitence.

There are also faults which do not come under the denomination of notorious sins, wherein directions are given for recovering the offenders without any mention being made of exclusion, either immediate or ultimate. There is perhaps in all the churches a description of men whose characters are far from being uniformly circumspect, and yet not sufficiently irregular to warrant their being separated from communion. They are disorderly walkers; busy-bodies in other men's matters, while negligent of their own; in a word unamiable characters. Now those that are such we are directed to exhort, and charge that they conduct themselves as becometh christians. If after this they continue disorderly, observe a degree of distance in your conduct towards them; withdraw your intimacy, let them feel the frowns of their brethren: yet be not wholly reserved, but occasionally explain to them the reasons of your conduct, affectionately admonishing them at the same time to repentance

and amendment of life. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.—For we hear that there are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies. Now them that are such we command, and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. And if any obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him that he may be ashamed: yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." 2Thess. iii. 6—15. If churches were to consult only their own reputation, they would often discard such persons at an early period: but where there is reason to hope that the heart is right in the main, great forbearance must be exercised, and long perseverance in endeavouring to recover. How many imperfections were discovered in the conduct of the twelve apostles, while their Lord was with them, and what an example of forbearance has he left us! One character reclaimed is of greater account and more to the honour of a christian church than many discarded.

Finally, a watchful eye upon the state of the church, and of particular members, with a seasonable interposition, may do more towards the preservation of good order than all other things put together. Discourage whisperings, backbitings, and jealousies. Frown on tale bearers, and give no ear to their tales. Nip contentions in the bud. Adjust differences in civil matters among yourselves. Bring together at an early period those in whom misconception and distrust have begun to operate, ere ill opinion ripen into settled dislike. By a frank and timely explanation in the presence of a common friend, that may be healed in an hour, which if permitted to proceed, a series of years cannot eradicate. Be affectionately free with one another. Give tender and faithful hints where it appears to you that one of your brethren is in danger of being drawn aside from the principles or spirit of the gospel. Let all be given, from their first entering into connection with you, to expect them. If any one take offence at such treatment, give him to understand that he who cannot endure a caution or a reproof, is unfit for christian society, and is in the utmost danger of falling into mischief.

The free circulation of the blood, and the proper discharge of all the animal functions, are not more necessary to the health of the body, than good discipline is to the prosperity of a community.

If it were duly considered how much the general interests of religion, and even the salvation of men, may be affected by the purity and harmony of christian churches, we should tremble at the idea of their being interrupted by us. The planting of a church in a neighbourhood where the gospel is preached, and the ordinances of Christ administered in their purity, is a great blessing. It is a temple reared for God, in which he deigns to record his name, to meet with his humble worshippers, and to bless them. We have seen churches of this description, in the midst of a career of spiritual prosperity, edifying one another in love, and gathering souls to the

Redeemer's standard, all in a little time, blasted and ruined by some unhappy event that has thrown them into disorder. One of the members, it may be, has acted unworthily—he is reproved—his relations or particular acquaintances take on his side—discipline is interrupted—the church is divided into parties—hard things are said on both sides—the bond of love is broken—tender minds are grieved, and retire—worship is but thinly attended, and the enjoyment of it is vanished—God's friends mourn in secret, and his enemies triumph, saying “Aha! so would we have it!” Truly it is a serious thing to occasion the ruin of a church of Christ! “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy!”

MACEDONIAN CRY.

Extract of a letter to the Editor of the Recorder, dated New Albany, Indiana, Oct. 31, 1818.

“The state of Indiana now presents a wide and hopeful field for missionary labour. Its population is about 150,000, and is very fast increasing. The people, to a very considerable extent, are very desirous of hearing the preached gospel. There are many infant churches formed, but very few have ministers. There are but nine presbyterian ministers in the whole state.

“In many places the people feel their need, and are begging of the few ministers they see for help. In other places, the ignorance and wickedness in which they live, excite our commiseration, give stimulus to prayer, and make us, in their behalf, cry for help. And to the missionary societies we say, the need is great, the field is wide and hopeful.—MEN OF ISRAEL HELP.”

From the Boston Recorder.

MR. WILLIS.—It is with lively emotions of pleasure, the writer learnt a few days since, that the church of Christ, under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Mr. Payson, at Portland, have voted to educate an indigent young man for the gospel ministry; and that one member has given one hundred dollars to the church fund, in consequence of this measure having been adopted. It must also be gratifying to the disciples of our Lord, to learn, that the Park-street church in this town, are making provision to do the same; and that the Old South are expected to follow. Oh that every church of God throughout our land, and the world, (who have the ability) would follow these blessed examples; and then would the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour speedily reach every part of the habitable earth.

T.

BIBLES.

It was stated in a newspaper lately, that, supposing the British and Foreign Bible Society were to distribute as many copies of the Scriptures each year, as they have done during the first twelve years,

wherein 1,675,994 copies have been circulated, it would still take four centuries to supply each individual in the world with a copy; and this is taking it for granted that the inhabitants of the countries called christian are already supplied.

BENEVOLENCE.

It is a tree of generous root,
Whose towering top the skies obtrude;
Its boughs are laden with a fruit,
Sweet to the taste of gratitude.

Beneath its wide extended shade,
The homeless orphan finds a rest;
The mourning widow lays her head,
While balm distils to heal her breast.

To every wo-worn son of want,
Its cheering fragrancy extends;
Perfumes the lonely traveller's haunt,
The friendless foreigner befriends.

When virtue on the painful couch
Of long and deep affliction lies,
It often, with a heavenly touch,
Its sweet and healing balm applies.

Its power shall ope the closed ear,
And kindly loose the chained tongue;
Its voice the deaf and dumb shall hear,
And raise to heaven their grateful song.

'Tis love's soft handkerchief, to wipe
From grief the sorrowing tear away;
The hand that loosens the cold gripe,
Of painful, pinching poverty.

It is a light that yet shall rise
On heathen lands how'er obscure;
Present the Bible to their eyes,
And gently point to worship pure.

On every nation, clime and land,
Its streams of life and light shall pour,
Till Gabriel swears with lifted hand
That earth and time shall be no more.

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